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Time to get excited!

Submitted by the London Lightning

The London Lightning's 10th Anniversary season is well underway, and your Bolts got off to a quick start, winning each of their first four games to sit atop the National Basketball League of Canada standings in the early going.

After starting the Season 10 campaign on the road, the Lightning played a 6-game homestand and are scheduled to play 10 of their 12 home games during the months of March and April.

Besides their regular NBL Canada competition, fans will have the chance this year to watch the Lightning compete against US-based teams, as The Basketball League's Syracuse Stallions (March 19), and Flint United (April 3) make their way to the Budweiser Gardens as part of the TBL and NBLC's cross-border partnership.

While there are plenty of new faces this season for the Bolts, a few familiar faces are back and leading the charge. American forward Cam Forte is back and leading the team (through the first four games, he averaged 22.0 points and 12.0 rebounds), while Canadian Terry Thomas earned Canadian Player of the Week honours the first week of March by posting an impressive stat line of 17.5 points, 8.3 rebounds and 3.5 assists per game in two wins. Thomas played three games last season for the Bolts before suffering a season-ending ACL tear.

A familiar foe is now a Bolt this season, as former Express guard Chris Jones has come over to the good side and is an important part of the Lightning rotation, contributing on both ends of the floor. Other newcomers that fans can get excited about are Jermaine Haley, a big Canadian guard coming off a stint with Team Canada's Senior Men's National team, and big man Amir Williams, a 6-foot-11 former McDonalds All-American and top 50 high school prospect from the Ohio State University.

Make sure to get your tickets! You can do so in-person at the Budweiser Gardens box office or online at www.budweisergardens.com.

www.lightningbasketball.ca

Jermaine Haley Jr

Cameron Forte

Jaylon Tate

London SportsXpress.ca

March/April 2022
London & Area Edition

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Punch/kick your way into shape

Submitted by 9Round London

We all know that getting started is the hardest part. But that's where 9Round London comes in ...

They're ready to help you punch and kick your way to meeting your fitness goals – whatever they may be.

"It's your turn to step up to the bag and find your inner fighter!"

New to 9Round London? You can book your FREE introductory kickboxing fitness session by calling or texting 'FIGHTER' to 519-204-7773.

Spring and summer on the way

With many COVID-19 restrictions now in the rear-view mirror, it's time to get outside and active, doing all the things you love. And, eventually, when the weather gets warm enough, get to the beach! No, that doesn't have to be your reason for getting in physical shape. There are countless reasons! But regardless of your reason, 9Round can help you reach your goals.

Why is 9Round unique? It uses kickboxing-themed workouts to achieve its goals of offering a full-body fitness program that can help participants lose weight, get in better shape, and become stronger – physically and mentally. The workouts are high intensity, they're 30 minutes in length, and they're led by a top-notch trainer. The exercises change daily, can be done on your own schedule, and offer both cardio and strength training.

About 9Round London

9Round London is proud of its commitment to its members' health and wellness, and to the education of its trainers. The diversity of our staff, with backgrounds in personal training, fat loss coaching, professional fighting, physiotherapy, and sports psychology, creates the ultimate blend of experience for members.

Working out at 9Round is always a unique experience. The 9Round circuit is focused on both losing weight and building lean muscle, using a blend of kickboxing techniques with high intensity interval training so that it's a killer workout every time. Members at 9Round have seen progress in their cardiovascular health, general mobility, flexibility and mental acuity!

www.9round.com

SportsXpress Network

March/April 2022

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Joining forces for fitness

Submitted by YMCA

Group Fitness at the Bostwick YMCA is for everybody! We have a wide range of classes – with more to come – as we progress further into our reopening. Group Fitness classes are led by certified instructors, and are designed to help you feel better, stronger and healthier – both in the gym and in your everyday life. Instructors will lead you through a fun, safe and effective workout and will show options and modifications so you can work at a level that suits your abilities, needs, and goals.

One of our newer programs is Strength and Stretch, a 35-minute interval workout using dumbbells followed by a 10-minute stretch. The class is designed for all levels – and options using a chair are even shown for those with mobility issues. Bootcamp is another great class designed for those looking to increase cardio and strength. Instructors will use dumbbells and other fitness accessories to provide an energizing and athletic workout that can be participated in at both low and high intensity levels.

If you are looking to relax and recharge while also building strength, balance and flexibility, our Yoga classes are calming and peaceful 1-hour sessions that anyone can participate in. These are just three of our offerings, and we have many more classes designed to meet different interests and abilities.

At the YMCA, we pride ourselves on our family engagement. In our Group Fitness classes, we welcome participants as young as 10 years old (10-12 years require parent or guardian supervision) and 13+ are able to participate in all of our adult fitness offerings. Our goal is to create an inclusive and engaging community, whereby we all work together to improve our wellness, health and happiness as a community.

www.ymcawo.ca

A variety of different group fitness classes are offered at the Bostwick YMCA, which prides itself on creating an inclusive and engaging community – with health and wellness the goal!

Winter 2022 Group Fitness Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
February 22nd – April 18th, 2022						
Active Agers 9:00am–9:45am	Group Cycling 9:00am-9:45am	Gentle Yoga 9:00am-10:00am		Yoga 9:00am-10:00am		
Yoga 10:00-11:00am	Strength and Stretch 10:00am-10:45am		Active Agers 10:00am – 10:45am	Group Active 10:00am-11:00am	Bootcamp 10:00am-10:45am	
Bootcamp 6:00pm-6:45pm			Strength and Stretch 6:00pm-6:45pm			Yoga 11:00am-12:00pm
		Group Centergy 7:00pm-8:00pm				

Please note: schedule may change during March Break.

A season of successes!

Submitted by Forest City Volleyball Club

The Forest City Volleyball Club (FCVC) believes that sports are extremely valuable for our youth to be happy, healthy, and successful. We have witnessed so much joy and dedication from our athletes this year as we have returned to playing the great sport of volleyball! Thanks to our amazing coaches and their commitment to the highest calibre of training, our teams have seen a tremendous amount of success in their development and in competitions this season.

Summer Volleyball Camps

The offseason is a time to explore new sports and challenges – but it can also be an opportunity for more volleyball skill-development by participating in FCVC Camps!

New coaches, new drills, new partners to scrimmage with ... these are all advantages available to athletes who supplement their club and high school volleyball training by participating in fun and challenging camps. This summer we are offering our popular Fundamentals and Elite Camps. Visit our website (forestcityvolleyball.com) for more information and registration details!

Summer camps are on the way!

FCVC 18UG Methuselah win GOLD at OVA Furlani Cup Championship

FCVC Icarus win BRONZE at OVA 16U Challenge Cup

FCVC Hyperion win GOLD at 17U Bugarski Cup Championship

FCVC Sequoia win BRONZE at OVA 16U Challenge Cup Championship

FCVC Cypress win GOLD at OVA 17U Bugarski Cup Championship

forestcityvolleyball.com | facebook: FCVCLondon | twitter: @go_fcvc | instagram: forestcityvolleyball

No lockouts for this growing league

Submitted by London Mens Baseball League

With the snow melting and sun shining just a little more with every passing day, the LMBL is very excited to enter its 30th season as a league. With the LMBL being an over-30 League, our league could now play in our league! (Sorry, bad Dad Joke).

Turning 30 can be tough if you are a human – you don't recover as fast as you did in your teens and your 20s. The LMBL, though, continues to get STRONGER as it ages. In fact, the off-season between the 2021 and 2022 seasons gave us our best year ever for registration.

Our 30th season kicks off Sunday, May 15 with all 14 teams competing with the chance of winning the coveted 'A' Championship. Our new scheduling format will give every team a chance to win the Big Prize – but also bring a more balanced schedule for all 14 clubs. No lockouts or strikes for our league …

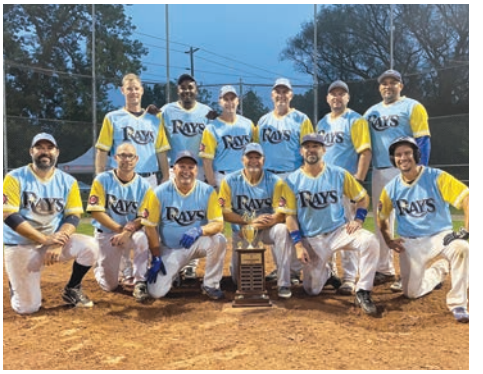
Big News: To help celebrate our 30th season, we will also be launching our 1st Annual LMBL All-Star Game – complete with a 7-inning game with our best players, a Home Run Derby, a BBQ, and more fun events to be added. The HR Derby will also be raising money for charity. All the fun will take place on Saturday, August 6 at Dan Pulham Field.

The All-Star Game will bring all of our teams together and aims to be our signature event of the season. As each team will be represented, it will be a great day for our players and their family and friends, too.

If you have interest in playing LMBL, come on out August 6 and see how much fun we have in the LMBL. We play once a week on Sundays from May to September. On long weekends, games are played on Mondays.

www.lmblbaseball.ca

2021 LMBL 'A' Champions: Aquarium Services Sharks



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Building a winner

Submitted by London Majors and photos by Matt Hiscox Photography

As always, it's been a busy offseason for Roop Chanderdat, the London Majors' co-owner, GM and field manager. He's tasked each winter with building a roster, including recruiting new players and bringing back key ones from the previous season. This year, that previous season was a championship one – the first in 46 years for the Majors.

By early March, Chanderdat had already signed a handful of players he hopes will be key contributors during the 2022 season as the Majors look to repeat as Intercounty Baseball League champions. Some of those players include ...

- Cleveland Brownlee (DH) – It'll be Brownlee's 12th season with the club... One of the most respected players with opponents, umpires and other fans around the league ... With 7 home runs with 21 RBIs in 27 games in 2021, he was staple in the top half of the Majors lineup throughout the season.
- Bo Lewington (RHP) – A newcomer, the 6'3" righty has spent time in the Pecos League with the High Desert Yardbirds, and in the WMBL with the Okotoks Dawgs.
- Braeden Ferrington (RHP) – His 2021 season saw him have career-bests in ERA (0.86), innings pitched (31.1) and saves (4) as perhaps the IBL's reliever of the year. Eleven of his 12 appearances came out of the bullpen.
- Keith Kandel (SS) – Returning for 7th year in the IBL (4th with the Majors). Quote from Kandel: "With the way the community supports us, and the successes we had as a team last year, it was a no brainer for me to want to be back in pinstripes for another run!"
- Pedro De Los Santos (LHP) – The league leader in ERA (2.19) in 2021. Trailed only teammate Owen Boon in strikeouts and wins. Was a key factor in the Majors winning the league pennant. Overall, pitched 90 innings in 12 games, giving manager Chanderdat quality outing after quality outing.
- Austin Wilkie (OF) – In his first season with the Majors, batted .303 in 27 regular season games – and .357 in the playoffs to help Majors' championship run. Was an asset on the basepaths (9 stolen bases) and tracking down balls while patrolling centrefield.
- Taylor Wright (INF) – A newcomer, Wright started all 58 games as a senior for the Maryland Terrapins in 2019, batting .290 with 20 doubles (4th most in a single season in Maryland baseball history). Also stole 12 bases (on 14 attempts).

Cleveland Brownlee and his Majors teammates celebrate their 2021 IBL championship win.

Keith Kandel

Austin Wilkie

www.londonmajors.com

Scoliosis and your jaw

By Gwen MacLean for Living Balance Clinic

I recently got Invisalign™ to correct misalignment of my teeth. My dentist noticed that I have four teeth with bone loss due to my bite being off. I was willing to go ahead and see if this would help prevent future issues. So, this has led me down a rabbit hole because I am my own best experiment.

I also have a curvature of my spine called scoliosis. I have seen many people unaware they have a mild scoliosis. The body does a good job of compensating to these curvatures since most people don't realize they have them.

I remember as a kid and young adult that I always ended up with pants that had one leg longer than the other. It was so frustrating. I would take the pants and measure the legs and they were the same length (how?). It wasn't until I went through my Massage and Structural Integration training that I realized I had scoliosis and that curvature caused my right hip to jut up and take my pants with it. Today, I do not notice this issue as my hips are much more even and my scoliosis is well-compensated due to being Structurally Integrated, having regular SI tune-ups and practicing Iyengar yoga which encourages balance and symmetry in my body.

After my dentist pointed out my misaligned teeth and jaw, which is shifted to the left, I realized that my jaw is following the left rotation of my torso and pelvis. You can say, well, the jaw is

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@structuralintegrationlondon

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Spring means baseball!

Submitted by Eager Beaver Baseball Association

With the tease of Spring, it's time to brush the dust off those gloves and register for the 2022 season! With the season just around the corner, what better way to get ready than to get involved in one of the clinics being offered through the league for Rookie, Mosquito and Peewee players. During the clinics, players go through basic drills of throwing, catching and conditioning. This gives the kids a chance to brush up on their skills in the sport we all love.

The clinics are for anyone registered for the upcoming season. Registration is open online! As an organization, we are looking forward to getting back on the field and seeing the smiles on the players' faces!

www.ebba.ca

EBBA players work on their skills during an offseason indoor practice

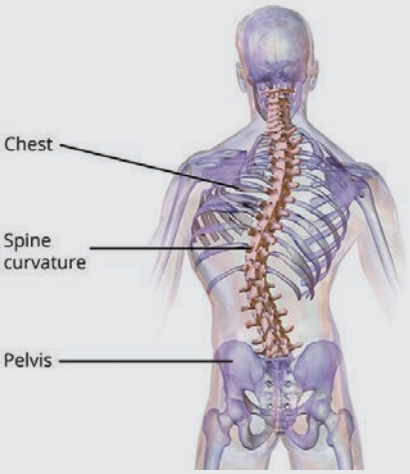
not connected to the spine, so how can it be affected? Actually, there is a sheet of connective tissue that runs from the pelvis to the jawbone on the front of the spine. So, if there is a rotation in the spine tissue connected to it, it will be pulled along in the same direction. I have had my Invisalign™ for two months now, and since I have been Structurally Integrated and am highly aware when my body is 'off,' I am noticing changes all over my body.

Two months ago, I finished the 10 series on a client, and she got Invisalign™ just as we finished. She came to see me the other day and had a lot of discomfort in her neck, shoulders and even in her feet. I realized that the changes in her mouth were cascading throughout the tissue in her whole body. We did one tune-up session and she walked out the door completely released of her discomfort.

The point to my story is to be cognizant that a child or adult getting braces or Invisalign™ could see shifts throughout their body. I have another seven months to go with my Invisalign™ aligners, and I'm interested to see what could happen with my scoliosis and the rest of my body.

If you have had braces in the past and feel as though they may have created strain in other areas of your body, contact me for a free Structural Integration consultation. These issues can be freed up, so you are more functional and comfortable in your body.

www.livingbalanceclinic.ca



LONDON BLUE DEVILS LACROSSE NEWS

Lacrosse Registration Open Now!

The 2022 lacrosse season is well and truly happening! Registrations for boys and girls' lacrosse are in full swing, and we're looking forward to an amazing 2022 season full of fast-paced action and fun.

At the LMLA, we are working closely with the Ontario Lacrosse Association and the City of London to ensure that we meet all safety regulations in conjunction with putting together all our great lacrosse activities. We'll keep everyone updated on any requirements as we navigate the 2022 season together.

We know that we have missed lacrosse, and we're hoping you have too! There's a reason lacrosse is known as Canada's National Summer Sport!

If you aren't already, jump online and follow our socials on Instagram and Facebook to ensure that you don't miss out or head over to the website at www.londonlacrosse.com to learn more! Registrations are open now, and we have some great early bird price discounts! So it's time to get your lacrosse sticks ready, Blue Devils!

Registration is open now! Get your lacrosse sticks ready!

www.londonlacrosse.com

The new normal in 2022

By John Laverty, EMSA President

The Elgin Middlesex Soccer Association (EMSA) is pleased to see the return of soccer to a more normal situation in 2022. EMSA would like to inform parents of some of the changes that they may see as the 2022 outdoor season gets underway ...

The pandemic has brought more people living in our District, and as a result, our registrations are growing. We welcome all of the new members to our District and look forward to serving them for many years to come! Parents who have struggled with the COVID-19 situation over the past two years and have not had the opportunity to witness their children play an entire season will now have the opportunity to attend all of their children's soccer events as we plan for a full outdoor season.

The Youth member clubs of EMSA will also see some changes beginning in the 2022 outdoor season. By now, they have become aware that they will be required to achieve the Canada Soccer Licensing level of quality soccer provider for the 2023 outdoor season. The application window for this license opened in early 2022 and will continue throughout the year. Youth clubs wishing to be a member of EMSA in 2023 will also need to provide proof of incorporation as either a for-profit or not-for-profit corporation.

Ontario soccer has embarked on a process to examine the governance model of soccer province-wide and has released a new strategic plan indicating a desire to move to a regional model of governance by 2025. EMSA is working with Ontario Soccer to better understand the impact this change may have on our District.

At the local level, we have seen much success at the Ontario Cup level in 2021 by a number of our local clubs. Congratulations on achieving this great milestone! We would also like to acknowledge the achievements of the EMSA Referees Association in placing several of its members at the highest levels of finals play in the province in 2021. A special congratulations to Traci Cummings, winner of the 2021 Carol Anne Chenard Award from Ontario Soccer for her outstanding contribution to the District over a number of years.

EMSA will continue to engage its members in assisting to develop policies and procedures that improve the soccer experience for all members of the District.

We wish everyone much success in the upcoming 2022 season.

www.emsadistrict.com

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2022 Spring Swim Lessons
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London CANADA

Pro soccer returns in 2022!

Submitted by FC LONDON

A new soccer season has also brought fresh new faces to FC LONDON.

Garrett Peters has been named the new head coach for the Club's League1 Women's team, and Ruben Quintão is the new head coach of the Men's side.

Peters, who was born in Montego Bay, Jamaica and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan, has been coaching for six years – including two at the Regional Excel Centre in Saskatchewan. Most recently, he ran Astra Soccer Academy's university prep program. As a player, he played at the CIS level with the Saskatchewan Huskies, earning CanWest First Team All-Star status and representing Canada at the World University Games along the way.

"I'm very excited to continue my coaching career here in London," said Peters. "This organization has a special group of coaches and players, and I can't wait to see how far we can push the women's programs of FC London and London TFC."

Quintão, who was born and raised in Forjães, Portugal, has been coaching at various levels for six years – first in Norway and now in Canada for the last three years. He holds a UEFA-B Licence taken in Denmark and is currently taking his UEFA-A Licence in Scotland. He considers his new role to be his biggest challenge in his career so far, and he's thrilled to take the reigns of FC LONDON's men's squad.

There will be returning players on both the women's and men's side, and also many new young talented players who will get the opportunity to showcase their abilities.

"We want to provide talented players with a professional environment and an opportunity to play at the highest level and to represent London," said David DeBenedictis, FC London's new Director of Soccer. "We are excited to see our academy players graduate to the League1 team, and we see many more academy players over the coming years. This is London's Club!"

Season passes and individual tickets will be available in the next few weeks, and they can be purchased by visiting www.fclondon.ca – or by visiting any of the team's social media platforms.

www.fclondon.ca

FC London introduced a new coaching staff during the winter for this summer's 2022 League1 season. Leading the women's team will be Garrett Peters (second from right), while Ruben Quintão (second from left) is the new men's head coach.

2022 LONDON TFC SUMMER CAMPS

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JULY

WEEK 1: 4TH-8TH
WEEK 2: 11TH- 15TH
WEEK 3 : 18TH- 22ND
WEEK 4: 25TH- 29TH

AUGUST

WEEK 5: 15TH-19TH
WEEK 6: 22ND-26TH

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WWW.LONDONTFCACADEMY.CA

She's Got Goals!

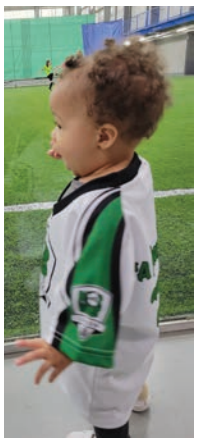
Submitted by NorWest Soccer

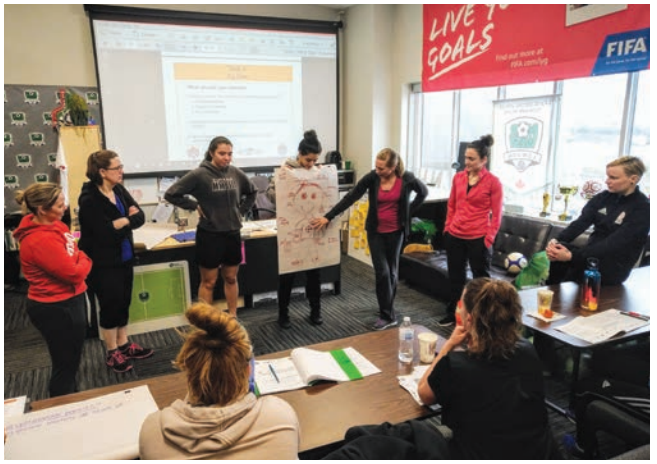
NorWest Soccer has run one of the biggest community recreational programs in London since 1979, so it made sense when NW families started asking NW for an indoor house league for girls – since the only consistent options for girls to play indoor soccer has been co-ed or competitive locally.

"There were those that told me it couldn't be done, but as a recreational player since 2003 (shout out to SistasInSoccer.com) and a mother of two girls in sport, I recognize the importance of combining physical activity with a social environment and leadership girls can identify with; so I started the groundwork for She's Got Goals in 2018," said Jennifer Jaquith.

(*Note: 70% of Canadian children quit sport by age 13; that number DOUBLES for girls – per Canada Sport for Life and RIS Keeping Girls in Sport online course).

"The first couple of years, we the lacked enough registrants to make teams (just twenty-six U7 through U18 participants in Fall 2019, and forty-eight in Fall 2020)," Jaquith said, "but I didn't want to disappoint the players that had committed by cancelling, so we converted to a Skills & Scrimmage program, using





What began as a dream has blossomed into a valuable offering for NorWest Soccer: An indoor house league for girls, now with more than 175 players registered – and games overseen primarily by female coaches and referees.

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female high school students as coaches to offer someone to look up to and keep the girls playing!

NorWest lost some families who returned to co-ed because it wasn't a 'real league' but recognized the importance of what the girls were asking for. They wanted more than inclusion; they were asking for a league of their own – like Outdoor!

"My daughters helped me design She's Got Goals branded t-shirts that we thought they'd wear on AND off the pitch (coaches got coordinating ones!), and I kept promoting SGG – pandemic or not," added Jaquith. "I maintained that, if we built it, they would come. And this year, it really caught on!"

SGG caught like fire, relative to its early days. Jaquith had to keep going back to the BMO Centre for more fields. By October, there were enough players for six small-sided game for U8 teams, and four each in U10, U12, U14, and U18; with 175+ girls registered for U6 through U18 and nearly all female coaches (in the signature matching swag) and referees – because, as Jaquith says, "You have to see it to be it!"

Enough female coaches volunteered that NW added another layer of the Female Mentorship to the Indoor season, opening a Google Classroom that offers fully subsidized Canada Soccer and NCCP courses for all of its female coaches – with hopes to seed Outdoor participation and prove that "Moms CAN coach!"

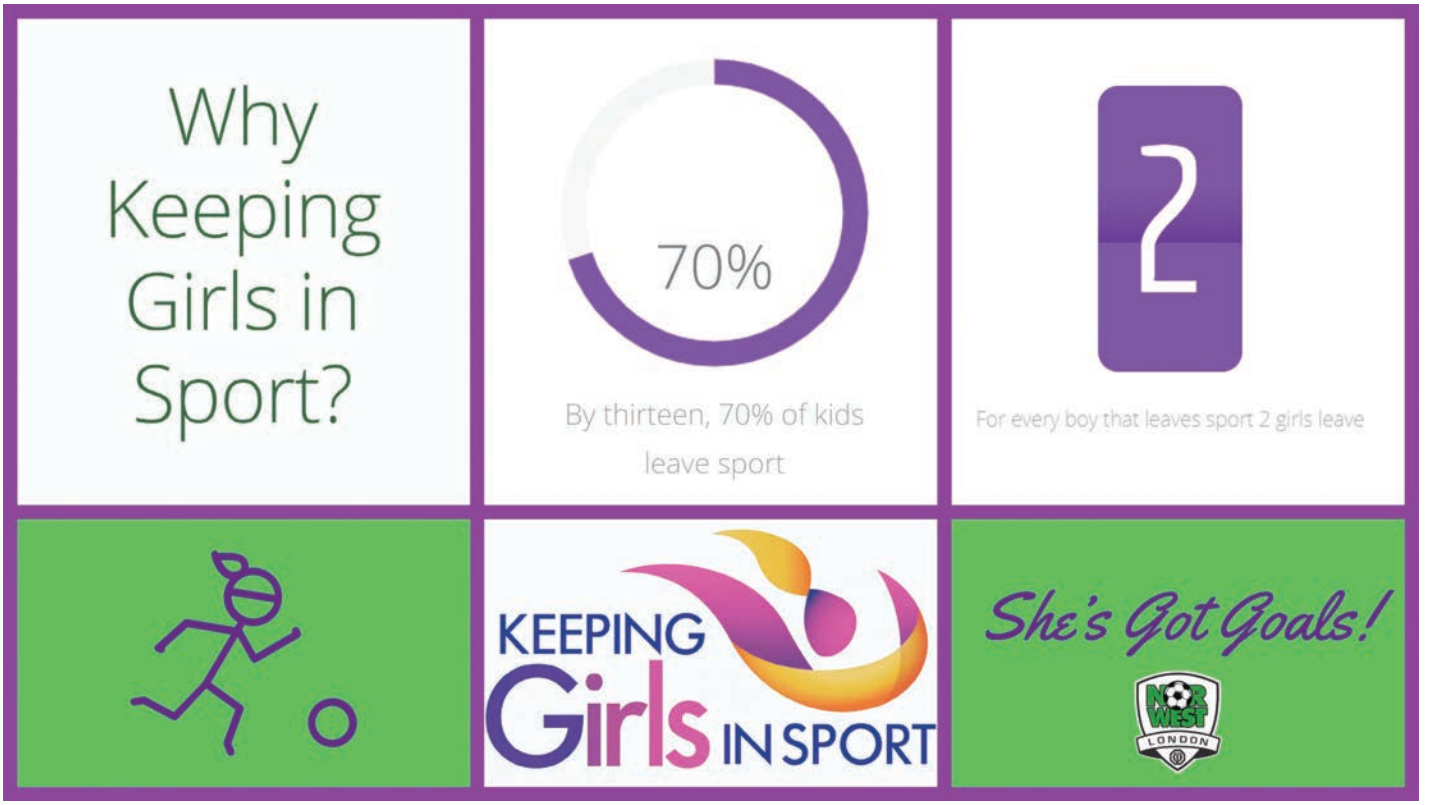
In Outdoor 2021, NW had female referees for 90% of female played games and has already seen a sharp increase in the number of female coaches volunteering for summer 2022. The NW plan is to continue to strengthen coaching and refereeing by offering #ForFemale (only) CSA courses annually and continuing to mentor, hire, and train equitably.

Jaquith's excitement for the upcoming season is clear.

"Between the success of London's Jessie Fleming [#17 National team & NorWest Soccer alumni], the Women's 2020 Olympic Gold in soccer, and the US National team's recent win on the right to equal pay, Soccer #ForFemales is all over the news, and our girls' 2022 Outdoor registration is on par with the boys' numbers for a change! And folks will want to watch for our SGG day camp this year too!"

They said it couldn't be done but… She's Got Goals!

www.norwestsoccer.com


Why Keeping Girls in Sport?
70%
By thirteen, 70% of kids leave sport
2
For every boy that leaves sport 2 girls leave
KEEPING Girls IN SPORT
She's Got Goals!
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COMMITMENT TO GREATNESS AWARDS

Presenting Bronze Winners: Keegan Gaunt and Isabella Anes

SUBMITTED BY NOTHERS THE AWARD STORE

We would like to congratulate our bronze Commitment to Greatness winners - Keegan Gaunt and Isabella Anes.

Keegan Gaunt is a 21-year-old Paralympic track and field athlete at the University of Guelph, where she studies Management of Economics and Finance. Diagnosed with Stargardt's Disease at 16, Keegan has been gradually losing her eyesight since and is now legally blind, but she's never let this stop her from dreaming (and pursuing) a Paralympic gold medal. Keegan says, "I see my sight loss as an ability, not a disability".

Isabella Anes is a 20-year-old Venezuelan basketball player for the University of Windsor. Isabella found herself chasing her dream of playing high-level basketball from Venezuela to the United States, and finally to Canada. She says, "my success no longer depends on getting what I want, but rather on wanting and appreciating what I get".

Both athletes have exceeded their own expectations for themselves and strive towards their own definitions of greatness each day. Nothers The Award Store is honored to support such dedicated athletes. Stay tuned for more about our gold and silver award winners, coming in the next issue of SportsXpress.

Commitment to Greatness Awards

How Local London Business **Nothers The Award Store** Recognized Perseverance in Sport

SUBMITTED BY NOTHERS THE AWARD STORE

The Olympics are a time when the world comes together to see greatness be recognized on a global scale. When an athlete from your country wins, it feels like that win is yours too.

Following the Winter 2022 Olympics in Beijing, Nothers The Award Store wanted to keep this feeling going by bringing the recognition a little closer to home, and awarding three Ontario athletes for their personal commitment to greatness.

With nearly 100 applicants, we were delighted that athletes were as inspired to write as we were when we were reading. The Commitment to Greatness Awards contest allowed us to see the barriers athletes have overcome in Ontario.

From receiving cancer diagnoses to losing parents, to battling mental health struggles- athletes showed us that they are willing to rise above it all in the name of sport, and in the name of greatness.

CONTEST DETAILS

THE COMMITMENT TO GREATNESS AWARDS CONTEST RAN FROM FEBRUARY 10TH-FEBRUARY 28TH 2022.

ONTARIO ATHLETES AGED 25 AND UNDER SUBMITTED 500-1000 WORD ESSAYS DESCRIBING THEIR PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO GREATNESS.

BRONZE WINNER - $500

SILVER WINNER - $750

GOLD WINNER - $1000

A pandemic, obesity, and getting active again

Steel Dragon Karate
519-615-4504
100 Wharncliffe Road S.
(Opposite Robert Q)

Submitted by Steel Dragon Karate

There have been few topics I've seen in my lifetime that have stirred up more emotional debate than the recent COVID-19 pandemic. I have heard so many stories about friends and family members separating themselves from each other because they had conflicting beliefs. How can you be so sure that you're right and they're wrong? Luckily for me, I have no friends to lose. I think it is going to be very interesting when we look back in five years and probably see that we were all wrong on one aspect or another.

I am going to avoid what my beliefs are on vaccination, social isolation, vaccine passports, masks, hand sanitization, the trucker convoy, school closures and shutting down businesses. My views are brilliant and 100% accurate, of course, but they may upset other people.

I want to focus, instead, on what we should be doing about this situation moving forward …

There has been a lot of discussion about the risk factors for the COVID. Age is usually mentioned first (that sucks from my standpoint, but I can't do anything about it). People who are immunocompromised are also at risk. Again, there isn't a lot that can be done to change that. What was the last one again? Oh, yeah … Obesity!

Why has THIS risk factor been discussed so little? It is the one that we have the most control over. I do not recall one politician telling his constituents that they should get outside and walk every day or that they should stop eating so much junk food. Too controversial? We are overweight as a nation, and the situation is far worse than it was two years ago. I am trying hard not to enrage anyone with my beliefs, but was closing gyms and keeping LCBOs open a great strategy? I'm just asking …

We need to be more physically active. A lot more. We need our kids to exercise more. The fact is, kids love getting involved in physically active games and activities. We should be heading out in droves to get back to (or start) being physically active. Hit the gym. Hit the dojo.

Here at Steel Dragon Karate, we believe that we offer one of the best options out there. Now, I am speaking purely from my personal beliefs, but training in martial arts has been scientifically proven to be good not only for physical wellness but for focus and mental acuity (and improving your immune system). We have members that range in age from four years old to people in their 60s. And we are SO certain of our system that we are offering a FREE MONTH OF TRAINING to new members. Come on in and get addicted to something that is good for you!

admin@steeldragonkarate.com

Martial arts training has been proven to be good for our physical wellness, our focus and mental acuity, and our immune systems! Time spent at the dojo is time spent well.

London to host 2023 Brier

Submitted by Tourism London

The world's most famous national men's curling championship will be making a return to London, Ont.

In late January, Curling Canada announced that the 2023 Tim Hortons Brier, presented by AGI, will be played March 3-12 at Budweiser Gardens in downtown London.

"Our past events in London have been memorable for so many reasons, so it was a pretty easy decision to return based on the superb bid they submitted," Katherine Henderson, CEO of Curling Canada, said in a media release. "Budweiser Gardens is a superb building in an ideal location, and we've seen repeatedly that London really knows how to put on a show. I can't wait to be there in 2023!"

London last hosted the Tim Hortons Brier in 2011 when Manitoba's Jeff Stoughton and his team from Winnipeg hoisted the Brier Tankard after defeating home-province hopeful Team Glenn Howard in the gold-medal game.

"The 2011 Brier is forever remembered as one of the most memorable times in the history of our city," said London Mayor Ed Holder. "Our community rallied around that event and came together as we welcomed curling fans from across Canada to London and showcased our great city. As remarkable as that event was, I have no doubt the 2023 Tim Hortons Brier will be even better as London sets a new gold standard for host city excellence."

The 9,000-seat Budweiser Gardens also played host to that 2011 Tim Hortons Brier in addition to the 2006 Scotties Tournament of Hearts. It will be the third time the Canadian men's championship has been contested in London; the 1974 Macdonald Brier, won by Alberta's Hec Gervais, was played at the old London Gardens.

London's history with major curling events is a rich one; the city has hosted highly successful editions of the Continental Cup of Curling in 2020 and 2018, as well as the 1981 World Men's Championship.

The winner of the 2023 Tim Hortons Brier will represent Canada a month later at the World Men's Curling Championship April 1-9 in a Canadian city to be named later this year. Additionally, the winning team will return to defend its title as Team Canada at the 2024 Tim Hortons Brier.

"We couldn't be prouder to welcome the Tim Hortons Brier back to London in 2023," said Peter Inch, who, along with Ted Smith and Ken Schofield, will serve as London host committee vice-chairs. "Thank you to Tourism London for all their work and support with the bid. We now have a lot of hard work in front of us to get ready, but we have a dedicated group of volunteers who know the ropes, and we are going to do what it takes to put on a great show."

Full event ticket packages went on sale March 8. Volunteer opportunities will be available later this year. Go to curling.ca/volunteer to sign up to receive updates on volunteering for the 2023 Tim Hortons Brier.

Since 1927, the Brier has been played in 32 cities across Canada, from Victoria to St. John's. Teams from Alberta have won 29 times, followed by Manitoba with 27 titles.

TSN/RDS2, the official broadcast partner of Curling Canada's Season of Champions, will televise all of the Brier action from London in 2023.

Action from the 2011 Brier, hosted at Budweiser Gardens (then the John Labatt Centre).

Welcoming new players in 2022!

Submitted by London Minor Football Association

Everyone is excited and happy to be on the playing field again in 2022. And after a challenging two years, London Minor Football is happy to welcome new players – with a variety of new programs.

Flag football will be offered this summer – with details available on our new and improved website! This is a perfect way to introduce new young players to football. As well, we are planning new player camps, including some for girls only to welcome them to our co-ed league. And, of course, we will offer our regular full tackle program in the fall.

Our focus is on sportsmanship, teamwork and staying active. Our mission is to prepare players for high school football and make football fans for life.

LMFA games are played on Sundays on the turf fields at Citywide Park in London as well as 1Password Park in St. Thomas. The season runs from mid-August to the end of October.

Please visit www.lmfafootball.ca or call 519-852-4465 for more information on the 2022 season and our summer camps and flag football programs.

www.lmfafootball.ca

Flag football action from 2020

LMFA indoor camp at Centrefield Sports

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Calendar of Events

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April 2
The Springbank Sprint,
Springbank Gardens

Apr 7-10
Alliance Hockey MD Championships,
Various arenas

May 8
Stars On Ice,
Budweiser Gardens

May 13
Opening Night,
Delaware Speedway

May 13-15
Hockeyfest,
Western Fair District

May 20
London Majors Home Opener vs.
Kitchener Panthers,
Labatt Park

May 27-29
St. Thomas Minor Baseball
8U, 10U, 11U, & 14U Tournament,
Doug Tarry Sports Complex

May 27
Camluck Classic,
Western Fair Raceway

May 27-29
London Pickleball Club Tournament,
Fanshawe College

June 3-5
St. Thomas Minor Baseball
9U, 12U, 13U & 15U Tournament,
Doug Tarry Sports Complex

June 4
Running Against Ruptures,
Springbank Gardens

June 11
Fanshawe Dragon Boat Festival,
Fanshawe Conservation Area

June 16
SARI Golf Tournament,
Riverbend Golf & Country Club

June 18
Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame
Induction Ceremony,
St Marys

July 9
5K Foam Fest Fun Run,
Boler Mountain

July 8-17
6th Annual London Talons Baseball
Tournament Week 1,
Stronach Fields

July 15-17
St. Thomas Minor Baseball
18U and Below Tournament,
Doug Tarry Sports Complex

July 16
3ICE Hockey,
Budweiser Gardens

July 23-24
PWC MS Bike Tours,
Grand Bend to London

Aug 27
Jordan's Run The Runway,
London Airport-Diamond Aricraft

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Skill work this spring

Contributions by Snipe Academy

What does Snipe Academy have going for it? A lot. For starters, the hockey training facility boasts an impressive roster of coaches, including many with professional playing experience in addition to their coaching training. How about this lineup of coaches ... John Warren, Ryan Rupert, Matt Rupert, Austin Osmanski, Mark Van Vlight, Hokey Langan, Billy Faragehrr, Alex Turko and Brett Welychka, along with skating specialist Keegan Knight.

The best part? These coaches continually learn from each other by attending in-house clinics and sharing sessions. This means they're constantly evolving and expanding their coaching skills, which translates into even better learning opportunities for young hockey players accessing Snipe Academy.

And what do those young players learn? Pretty much every aspect of the game – and most certainly shooting skills. Players learn in a 1-on-1 coaching environment or in group sessions. Regardless, the goal of Snipe Academy is to provide opportunities for more rep, more reps, more reps. That's how young players get better, after all.

The beauty of Snipe Academy is that it offers on-ice training for in-game situations without the cost of ice rental. It's real hockey training using drills to work on specific game situations.

What's new at the Academy? This summer, Coach Billy Faragehrr will be offering a program called 'Automatic Reaction.' The on-ice program will feature training in agility, skating and puck skills, and focus on improving a player's reactive decision-making and 'heads up' play.

Meanwhile, the Academy will continue to offer its outdoor agility and puck skills program this summer, which puts the focus on quick feet, agility and power; and group drop-in shooting classes and small group elite summer packages will also be available this summer. There's always hockey happening at Snipe Academy, where players are constantly improving their skills and taking their games to the next level.

www.snipeacademy.com

Young hockey players are constantly developing their skills on and off the ice at Snipe Academy, a premiere hockey training facility in London.

Lifelong Raider to compete on world stage

Submitted by Red Circle Hockey

At the age of 8, Nikki Fulford joined the Red Circle family – and she's never looked back. She has excelled as a player, and she also took on a coaching role early in her career. She currently oversees running the Mite division, focusing on players 4 to 6 years old, teaching them fundamental hockey skills. She is also a past recipient of the Steven Armstrong Award, given to a player who exhibits dedication to Red Circle through play, volunteering and ensuring everyone has a great experience.

During the pandemic, Nikki took up ball hockey as a summer activity and, like most things she sets her mind to, she has mastered that sport too, starting her own team in 2020 and going undefeated in her first year. In 2021, she was invited to try out for Team Canada and, after a rigorous tryout weekend, was named to the team!

In June, Nikki and Team Canada will travel to Slovakia for the World Ball Hockey Championships. We wish her and the rest of the team the best of luck and hope they bring home the gold!

For more information on Red Circle Hockey Club, please visit our website and follow us everywhere at @redcirclehockey.

www.redcirclehockeyclub.com

Nikki Fulford, a long-time Red Circle player and coach, will represent Canada at the 2022 World Ball Hockey Championships in Slovakia in June.

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Oct 1 Boston Red Sox

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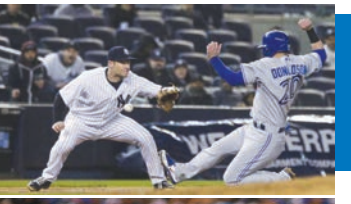
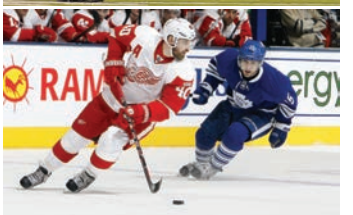
Jun 11 Toronto Blue Jays
Jun 12 Toronto Blue Jays

See website for details and pricing.





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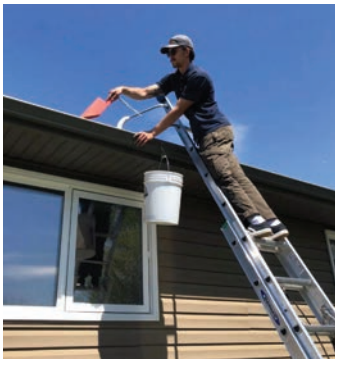

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A hockey club for all!

Contributions by Greater London Hockey Association

The GLHA is dedicated to providing outstanding hockey experiences for its players. It's been this way for years. Thousands of youngsters have spent their formative years playing the game – and having fun – within the GLHA, and the Association is excited to grow and offer more youth the opportunity to enjoy those same experiences.

What's it all about? GLHA coaches are focused on teaching and coaching all the fundamental hockey skills, like skating, shooting and passing, but also skills like teamwork, work ethic and resilience – which help youngsters grow as individuals, both on and off the ice, and serve them well in all aspects of their lives.

It's the volunteer coaches and administrators that really make the GLHA flourish, and the Association is grateful for each and every one of them for giving their time to make it possible for youngsters to enjoy the great game of hockey.

The GLHA oversees London's four largest minor hockey clubs (the London Bandits, West London Hawks, North London Nationals and Oakridge Aeros), as well as the London Jr. Mustangs. The Association is a member of the Alliance Hockey Program.

An option for everyone

The GLHA serves nearly 3,000 players. There is a house league offered to those aged 3 to 21, a competitive program (ages 8 to 18), and a seeded program (ages 10 to 18). The house league runs from October to March, while the competitive teams have tryouts in early September and play from September to April (the seeded program has tryouts in the spring and begins its season end of September). In other words, depending on a player's (and family's) skill or commitment level, there's something for everyone.

Registration for GLHA programs opens in the spring (visit www.glha.ca for full info).

New to hockey – or new to the area?

The GLHA might be the perfect fit for you! Go check out some GLHA action, and maybe you'll be inspired to take up the game. The Association is looking to grow the game of hockey in the region to youth of all ages, abilities and backgrounds – including newcomers to London.

There are a lot of communities who aren't experiencing all that hockey has to offer, and the GLHA is looking to change that. They're hoping to reach these communities and provide positive hockey experiences for these youth (and their parents!). This, the Association says, is an important step in growing the game of hockey and making everyone feel welcome.

In addition to expanding opportunities to all communities, the GLHA is also focused on ensuring a safe, fun and welcoming environment for all its players. At a Town Hall meeting this year, the organization addressed anti-racism in sports and how the teams and the Association can ensure a more equitable and inclusive environment for all players, parents, coaches, and officials – and how the GLHA can support this.

And that's the key. Hockey is a wonderful game. A wonderful game that should be enjoyed by all! Check out the GLHA. It might be the perfect fit for you.

www.glha.ca

The Greater London Hockey Association has enjoyed some great action in its return-to-hockey season, and the Association is looking to grow, welcoming youth hockey players of all backgrounds to play Canada's game.

The tradition continues

Contributions by Greg Matthison

Carrying on an impressive tradition built up over the last 15 years, GOT GAME Sports has announced that London's spring street hockey tournament will continue in 2022.

"There's a huge army of streetballers who were disappointed to hear the event wasn't going to happen the last couple of years because of COVID," said Greg Matthison, the captain of GOT GAME Sports. "I wanted to bring that energy and excitement back to the city."

Matthison's own two kids – who have been asking for months – and countless other youth and adult hockey players who love the game will get to experience London's world-class street hockey event this spring.

"For a sports and hockey fan, there really is no better weekend downtown at Victoria Park than during this tournament," said Matthison.

The GOT GAME Street Hockey Tournament will attract recreational and competitive players of all ages – and the teams will take over the streets around Victoria Park for exciting street hockey action the weekend of May 21-22.

Hoops happening too!

An exciting addition to this year's event is the combining of the street hockey event with street basketball. In 2019, GOT GAME Sports brought back London's tradition (of a decade ago) of hosting a massive street basketball event at Victoria Park. It was re-invented by GOT GAME – and now it's back again.

"The event is full of energy and excitement, as players from all over come out to play hoops in its most basic form," said Matthison. "That energy was gone, but now it's back, and I'm excited for what's in store this spring."

Many local basketball associations supported the 2019 event, and there were divisions in each age category. The same is in store for 2022 for a post-pandemic tourney that will continue to grow the game of basketball in the region.

The street basketball tournament's return, combined with the highly successful hockey tourney, will have the streets buzzing around Victoria Park.

"It'll be unreal with both events running at the same time," said Matthison. "So many people are hungry to return to playing sports and participating in fun and competitive tournaments. Coming out of the pandemic, this year's event will be one people will remember for a long time."

For more information, visit:

www.GOTGAMEsports.ca

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Community of Champions

Submitted by Shake Lager

Shake Lager is proud to launch a community focused program that highlights incredible levels of achievement coming out of London, Ontario and surrounding communities.

"As an organization, we believe that people want to support winners and celebrate achievements, and we wanted to create a program to bring more attention to these champions in our community," said Justin McKellar, President of Equals Brewing Company.

The program is a manifestation of what Shake Lager stands for – achievement, excellence and taking time to enjoy the win. Recipients are welcomed and inducted into the Community of Champions based on their incredible achievements in the world of athletics, medicine and care of the community. Recipients join us for a virtual interview to chat about the importance of their hometown communities and how they enjoy their wins. Inaugural inductees include:

- Maggie MacNeil - Canadian women's swimming gold medal winner
- Jessie Fleming - Canadian women's soccer gold medal winner
- Damian Warner - 2021 Canadian Athlete of the Year
- Ella Shelton - Canadian women's hockey gold medal winner
- Dr. Christopher Pin - Lead researcher of the Baker Centre for Pancreatic Cancer at LHSC

www.shakelager.com/communityofchampions

Shake Lager will continue to celebrate the Community of Champions with more amazing recipients in the coming months.

About Shake Lager

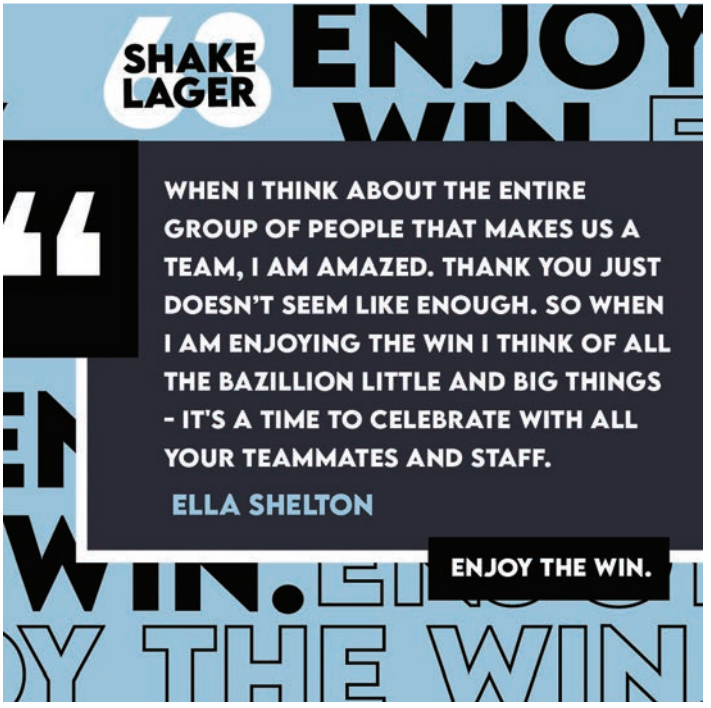
Shake Lager (www.shakelager.com) is a part of London's Equals Brewing Company. It is only fitting that the brand supports award winning achievers, as Shake Lager won Gold at the Canadian Brewing Awards for best North American Lager.

Shake Lager was developed as a tribute to Rick 'Shake' Baker, one of Equals Brewing's founding partners. Unfortunately, Rick lost his battle to pancreatic cancer in 2020, but he left his legacy of achievement and community with everyone that knew him. Rick and his family helped found the Baker Centre for Pancreatic Cancer Research at the London Health Sciences Centre, which provides life-changing cancer research to those not only in London, ON but nationwide. $0.20 of every can of Shake Lager sold is donated directly to the Baker Foundation.

Shake Lager is available in The Beer Store and select grocery stories and is coming soon to LCBOs in Southwest Ontario. Online ordering is also available at equalsbeerfridge.com.

Ella Shelton

Maggie Mac Neil


SHAKE LAGER
ENJOY
WIN
WHEN I THINK ABOUT THE ENTIRE GROUP OF PEOPLE THAT MAKES US A TEAM, I AM AMAZED. THANK YOU JUST DOESN'T SEEM LIKE ENOUGH. SO WHEN I AM ENJOYING THE WIN I THINK OF ALL THE BAZILLION LITTLE AND BIG THINGS - IT'S A TIME TO CELEBRATE WITH ALL YOUR TEAMMATES AND STAFF.
ELLA SHELTON
ENJOY THE WIN.

SHAKE LAGER
ENJOY
WIN
I THINK IT'S INCREDIBLE. WE'VE HAD SUCH AN AMAZING YEAR AT THE OLYMPICS. FIVE OUT OF SEVEN GOLD MEDALS CAME FROM LONDON.
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